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The struggle for dynastic power is apparent in the economic field.

643 The control over the wealth and the potential resources of the country,
652 though not exclusively the king's, is yet sufficiently his to render his
661 economic position unassailable. The king of Nupe derived his income firstly from the taxes and tributes which his officers collected, and of which he received the largest share, and secondly, from the wars and raids which the king's armies carried into foreign lands. The king's private estates constituted a third important source of income. These estates were worked by slaves who lived in small hamlets on the royal lands called *esoži*. We shall discuss the organization—past and present—of these royal estates later, in the chapter on land tenure. Here we need only say that not all the Emirs of Nupe were equally keen farmers; some, *Etsu* Mohamadu for example, let things drift; they took little interest in their estates, neglected their *esoži*, and cared only about the regular payments of their share in the yield of the farms.

Other sources of income are less clearly defined—profits made from commerce (above all, from slave-trade), in which an *Etsu* Nupe, like every Nupe nobleman, might sometimes engage; or proceeds from bribes, extortion, and the confiscation of estates belonging to rebels and other 'enemies of the country'. One interesting variety of this latter kind is the exploitation of a religious institution, a 'king's cult' of com-
[675] paratively recent origin, the anti-witchcraft society which is known in Nupe as the *ndakó gboyá*. The Fulani Emirs had ingeniously grasped the control over this powerful and lucrative secret society and shared the proceeds with its members; the share of *Etsu* Bello in one year is said to have amounted to over £100.[1]

643 Another source of income, which will gain the economist's special
652 appreciation, lay in the royal monopoly of the kola-nut trade. You will
655 find to-day two kinds of kola-nuts on the markets of Nupe (or for that
439 matter Nigeria): the small cheap kind, which is imported from the Gold
661 Coast and Southern Nigeria, and the large, most expensive kola-nut which is grown in Nupe country, on the farms of the kola-nut planters of Laboži. Till the days of British rule this latter kind, famous all over Nigeria, could be procured only by the members of the nobility; no commoner or peasant had any opportunity of obtaining Laboži nuts. The trade in these nuts was a strict monopoly of the *Etsu* Nupe, the kola-nut growers being forbidden to sell their crop to anyone except his own agents.[2] Stories are current of traders smuggling the precious fruits out of Laboži by night, lest they should be seen and caught by the men of the king. In the kola-nut monopoly an instrument of sharp class-prerogative was cleverly combined with an efficient economic measure.[3] But to what extent the *Etsu* Nupe disposed of the kola-nuts as gifts to his courtiers and favourites, and to what extent he made money by selling them to the nobility of the country, I am unable to say.

[1] See p. 142 and *Africa*, 4, 1935.

[782] [2] The *Etsu* Nupe in turn supplied the kola-nut planters with slaves to help
● 567] them in their work. In pre-Fulani days the kings of Nupe are reported also to have presented one slave every year to Laboži to be sacrificed in the annual ritual with which the Laboži planters secured the thriving of their crop.

[3] See p. 129.

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We shall see later that the explanation of this incorporation of artisans and brokers in the rigid bureaucracy of the kingdom lies in the control which the state exercises over crafts and merchandise; only by means of a control of this kind could the head of this warlike state secure an unimpeded supply of the commodities that were vital to the court and the state: arms, clothes, and saddles for the soldiers, food for the huge capital, and the luxuries that were needed for the display of royal power and wealth. We find convincing evidence for this interpretation in the fact that the different crafts are not of equal standing. Some rank higher than others, and this grading is not correlated with economic success: the very prosperous butchers are last on this list, blacksmiths and brassmiths, on the other hand, head the list, 'for they are makers of arms'. Only the glass-makers, a strongly independent and important craft, stand aloof from this order of craft-guilds. This is a list of the craft-guilds in Bida, with the titles of the guild-heads, arranged in order of precedence.

The figure in brackets shows the number of *ekpā* in which they live. The titles of the guild-heads are given in italics.

Brassworkers (2): *Muku.*
Blacksmiths (3): *Dokodza.*
Carpenters and Builders (1): *Egbaba.*
Barber-Doctors (3): *Sokyara.*
Beadworkers (2): *Majī Lantana.*
Leatherworkers (scattered in the town): formerly *Majī Kimpa.*
Weavers (3): *Leshe, Majī, Ndakó.*
Butchers (3): *Sonfawa.*
Glass-makers (1): *Masagá.*

SLAVERY

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The lowest in the complex order of social classes in Nupe are the slaves (*wuzi*, as against *egi*, freeman, lit. child). But in this one class there are shades and distinctions of social status. Some slaves have risen to positions of wealth and influence. Others have remained menial workers in the households and on the farms of their masters. Pre-British Nupe numbered its slaves by the thousands. Twenty to thirty slaves was a moderate average for the household of a man of consequence. The prosperous craftsmen of Bida town, blacksmiths and weavers, always had slaves to work for them; even in villages one found households with one or two slaves.

The people of Nupe obtained their slaves by two methods: first, there were the slaves captured in the war, who became the property of the man to whose share in the booty they had fallen; and second, there were slaves bought in the markets of Bida.[1] The majority of the latter, it seems, were slaves sold by their captors—noblemen who had taken more slaves than they needed for their household. Slaves were also sold abroad, mostly to the south. Many Nupe men of rank were engaged in

[1] Lander reports that 200 slaves were on sale in the market of Rabá, the then capital of Nupe (*op. cit.* iii, p. 313).

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professional slave-trading; they acted as middlemen between the slave markets of the north, Kano, Katsina, and others, and the buyers in the south, on the river and coast.[1]

At the time of the Fulani conquest the price paid locally for an able-bodied male slave was 40,000 cowries, i.e. £1, and for a female slave 50,000 cowries, i.e. £1. 5s.[2] The price of slaves rose very high in later times. Shortly before the British occupation it had reached the sum of £7 for male, and £7. 10s. for female slaves. As my inquiries from various informants showed, this price had become almost standardized in the last decade before the British occupation and was valid throughout the country. It is interesting to note that this rise in price took place at a time when the largest market for slaves from Nupe was disappearing, shipments of slaves to countries overseas, especially to the Americas, having come to an end. We cannot say how this rise in price started, nor what might have been its cause. I can only suggest that it was due to increased difficulties of supply. Half a century of wars and raids had denuded the country of people who could with no great difficulty be made slaves. Slave-raiders were forced to obtain their human chattels in more distant areas and by more serious warfare—in the language of the economist, under conditions of higher 'cost'. Whatever the cause, this rise in price meant that the commoners and peasants of Nupe could derive from the wars and raids by which their rulers gained their fortunes not even the benefit of cheaper slave labour. Commoners and peasants would suffer when their country was defeated and their villages invaded by the enemy, or when, in civil wars, rival troops fought on their land. But the fruits of victory—rich booty in slaves—they could share only at a price: the same price which foreigners had to pay when buying slaves from Nupe in the open market.

Slaves were, in the strict sense of the word, the property of their masters. If anyone killed a slave belonging to somebody else this was not regarded as a case of murder or manslaughter, but only as an offence demanding restitution of the 'destroyed' property, i.e. the full purchase price had to be paid over to the owner. But the slaves who were kept in the houses of the Nupe nobility were on the whole well treated. The master of a slave was quite within his rights if he chose to maltreat him, sell him again, or even kill him. But there is no doubt that this happened rarely—if ever. Many slaves, in fact, preferred to stay on in the houses of their ex-masters when slavery was abolished, in the position of an unpaid servant or retainer, rather than to start life on their own, especially if they were of advanced age. Custom even guaranteed the

[1] Barth states that most of the slaves from Kano were carried by small caravans to Bornu and Nupe; 'the best of slaves now go to Niffee (Nupe) to be there shipped for America. . . . Slaves are sent from Zinder to Niffee. Indeed it now appears that all this part of Africa is put under contribution to supply the South American market with slaves' (Dr. Barth, op. cit. ii, pp. 132 and 135). Lander mentions that the slaves brought to Rabá were purchased by southern peoples, traded down the Niger, and from there 'delivered from hand to hand till they at length reached the sea' (op. cit. ii, p. 298).

[2] See Schoen-Crowther, *Journals*, p. 194, and J. and R. Lander, op. cit. ii, p. 298.

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slaves a not inconsiderable measure of economic and social independence. An adult male slave would work for his master in the same way as sons and junior relations work for the head of the household. If he was put to farm-work, he would be given a small plot of his own to cultivate in his spare time. Or if he helped his master in a craft or in trade he would be able to count on a regular commission. Other slaves, who made good soldiers, were put into their master's private army, in which they would serve as foot-soldiers, armed and equipped at their master's expense. In the wars they would have their share of the booty. Slaves could thus acquire property, and the more fortunate owned horses, sheep, cattle, money—even slaves of their own. But when they died their property fell not to their wives and children but to their master.[1] Female slaves became personal servants of their mistresses or possibly concubines of their master. Unlike the male slaves they had no income of their own; what they might earn—by handicrafts or trade—would be their master's property.

Frequently the master would have to find wives for his male slaves; he would buy either a slave girl from the market, or possibly a girl belonging to another master—a slave girl to whom his own slave may have lost his heart. In the latter case a very reduced price would be paid, but the children would belong to the owner of the girl. But a slave might make money enough during his service to pay the bride-price for a free woman—mostly a widow, for whom a low bride-price is paid. In such marriages the free wife would in no way share the conditions of slavery, she would have her own house and work (a farm or trade) and might in due course be able to ransom her husband. Or a slave who had done well might be able to buy his own and his children's liberty. In this case he had to pay the full purchase price, except in the case of very old slaves who were no longer good for work—they would be released for half the amount. But if the offer to ransom a slave came from the slave's (free) relations, the owner would ask an exorbitant price, up to £20 or £30. Very rarely would a master let a slave free without the payment of the ransom, for example, as reward for faithful service. In all these cases the slave would bring two men as witnesses of the act of manumission.

A slave girl often became the wife of a free man—her own master or another man who bought her from her master, the purchase price replacing in this case the usual bride-price. This was not, however, real marriage; the slave girls became only concubines, not wives, and no religious or legal ceremony accompanied the marriage. Once they had borne their 'husband' a child, both mother and child became automatically free (though the status of a concubine remained unchanged). The families of the Fulani nobility count an innumerable offspring from this type of concubinage.

Children born of a free father and a slave mother were thus free

[1] To-day, more than thirty years after the abolition of slavery, this rule still holds in a modified form, with respect to ex-slaves who die without issue. In a court case heard before the Chief *Alkali* in Bida in 1936 the considerable property (cattle) of an ex-slave who had died without heirs was thus awarded to the son of his ex-master.

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themselves; so were children born of a slave father who married a free woman, and also of a slave father who bought a girl slave for himself and married her. If, however, slave married slave, the marriage being arranged—i.e. the purchase price for the girl paid—by the slave's master, the children remained slaves. But these slaves in the second generation were slaves of a different kind. They were no longer called *wuši*, but *mangi*, 'born as child' (i.e. as freeman). Though not really free they were exempted from many of the disabilities of slavery. The children of a *mangi* who married another *mangi* were themselves *mangi* slaves again. But a *mangi* could not be sold by his master, nor could he be maltreated or killed—in the latter case his parents could obtain legal redress and would be paid the usual purchase price as 'blood-money'. At the death of a *mangi* only half of his property could be claimed by the master, the other half was inherited by his own family. The *mangi* also had family farms of their own, and were generally treated like full members of the household in everything except that they were not entitled to any share in the inheritance of their master's property. A *mangi* was brought up together with the children of the house, was given the same education, and, like the sons of the house, served in the mounted household troops. Many *mangi* would free themselves, or at least marry free women. But the names of these house-born slaves invariably betrayed their origin; for they were named by their masters, and given not the usual Nupe names but names made up of some well-known blessing formula, of the first words of a proverb, and such like, for example: Adetsua, from *a de 'tsu à sei Sokó*, 'there is no Lord but God'; Barsu, from *bar su ga Allah* (Hausa), 'leave them to God'.

It would be wrong, however, to assume that slavery in Nupe carried with it a stigma. True, the people of Bida still speak with contempt of the 'pagans' and 'slaves' (the two terms are almost synonymous) into whose countries their fathers had carried their profitable raids. But, characteristically for Nupe, the stigma attaches to the humble status rather than to the misfortune of having been made a slave. It disappeared with the signs of success and prosperity, open to slaves as to anyone. The wretched slave who could never rise above a menial labourer had to bear the ignominy of his position. But in the case of the trusted slave in a noble household, and above all the successful, freed slave, the taint of slavery meant little more than, in their own words, 'luck of war'. Slaves who served in the houses of the high nobility did indeed share some of the splendour that surrounded the position of their masters. Able and faithful slaves were rewarded with the position of head slaves, overseers, bailiffs; their masters bestowed upon them rich presents and gifts of land—more land than they cared to work with their own hands, having become men of wealth and importance. Their masters bestowed upon them, above all, special titles, household ranks—the ubiquitous symbol of social rise in Nupe, which in this case obliterated even the last external symbol of slave status, the typical slave-names.

The royal houses of Nupe, like every nobleman's house, had their host

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The royal houses of Nupe, like every nobleman's house, had their host of slaves: slaves for menial work—in the house and on the land—as well as the titled slaves of respected position. At the court this latter group of slaves formed the *ena ɛuzi*, the Order of Court Slaves, a distinguished slave *élite* into which only few selected slaves could ever hope to be admitted. From the slaves captured in war those of high birth and status, chiefs or distinguished warriors, were selected for the court. These, too, were given ranks and titles, and could rise high in the service of the king. Theirs was the specialized service of officials and trusted royal agents. There were those who looked after the king's vast household; those who were in charge of the *Etsu* Nupe's no less imposing harem—both offices formerly entrusted to eunuchs.[1] Other slaves formed the king's bodyguard and police force; they were provincial delegates, tax collectors, trusted messengers, 'liaison officers' between the king's palace and the houses of his noblemen, and between the king and the army in the field. These slaves, like the other rank-holders, owned land and held fiefs. The Nupe kings in Rabá are said to have had only four titled court slaves; the slave ranks that existed at the court of Bida some thirty years ago (and the ranks still exist, although their holders are no longer slaves) were more than three times that number. Under *Etsu* Maliki, one of the last independent kings of Nupe, the most responsible state offices were taken from royal princes and *sarakiži* and entrusted to slaves. The position of the slaves as officers of state thus seems to have overshadowed more and more all other state ranks. Slave ranks were ranks bestowed *ad personam*, and ranks bestowed by the king personally, independent of the council of princes and ministers; and this gives us the explanation for their rise in importance. The offices linked with civil and military rank also depended to some extent on the personal favour of the king. But once appointed, these men stayed on, servants of the kingdom rather than of the king. They had behind them the claims of powerful families, they were exponents of political factions, and could play on that 'balance of power' between the dynasties. The slaves were personal servants in the full sense of the word. They were brought into office, not by family claims or promotion or a rigid rule of succession, but by personal appointment, selection, and trial. They were bound to the king's service generation after generation, by the strongest bond: their position of unfree men. It frequently happened that a new *Etsu* took over the slaves who had served his predecessor and left them their ranks and possessions. The rise of the slave officials at the Fulani court is the counterpart of the rise of a powerful, dangerously independent feudal nobility.

The following is a list of slave ranks held to-day, not by slaves, but by former slaves or descendants of slaves at the court of the *Etsu* Nupe. I have again tried to indicate in what manner they received their title, and also in certain cases the office which some of them are holding to-day in the Bida Town Administration. That so many of these former slaves

[1] In the pre-Fulani kingdom the court is said to have employed only a few slaves—all eunuchs. All slave ranks which have a *nda* in their title, meaning 'father' (ranks that are still in use—see attached chart), were originally ranks reserved for eunuchs.

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had been placed in responsible positions proves what I have said about the selection and rise of slave officials at the court of Bida.

Slave Ranks

Title	*Tribal origin*	*Present office*	*Biographical remarks*
Gabi Seidi	Kupa	'Officer of Liaison' between *Etsu* and District Officer	A rich slave who under *Etsu* Bello bought his title for £16.
Ndatwaki	Yagba	On the Bida Town Council	Father was *Ndatwaki* under *Etsu* Maliki; he himself received the same title under *Etsu* Bello.
Dzwodfu	,,	,, ,,	An hereditary slave title, first granted under *Etsu* Usman.
Ndamdraki	Bunu	,, ,,	Father was *Ndamdraki* under *Etsu* Masaba.
Sántali	Benu-Nupe	..	Grandfather was a slave of Usman Zaki; they remained slaves of this house.
Masántali	Yagba	..	Grandfather was a slave of *Etsu* Umaru Majigi; they remained slaves of this house.
Swajiyd'tsu	,,	..	Father held same slave rank.
Ndatódo	,,	..	Father held the same title and also title of *Ndamdraki*.
Manfúda	,,	..	Another slave title which has become hereditary in one house.
Sonmdti	Kusopa-Nupe	..	Id.
Ndddari	Nupe	..	Id.
Shangbo	Nupe from Rabá	..	Father was a *saraki* (*Somasū*) of *Etsu* Majiya. He was made prisoner in the war and became a slave of *Etsu* Masaba.
(*Sarkin Dogari*	Hausa	Head of police force	To-day not regarded as slave title. Formerly bestowed on a personal slave of the ruling king.)

WAR

It will be understood that this description is based entirely on information and the historical recollections of informants. However, the wars that were fought in Nupe and by the Nupe are not so far distant that there are no longer eyewitnesses left, or people who have themselves borne arms in these wars. Thus information could be checked and cross-checked. For certain details I could, moreover, count on most authoritative informants, who had played a leading part in the last wars of the kingdom; the description of the military organization, for example, is based on information obtained from the late commander of the *élite* troops of Nupe, the king's bodyguard.

War was essentially a concern of the Nupe state. No warfare or organized fights occurred between the villages or tribal sections of the

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country.[1] But villages and tribal sections were frequently involved in the wars of the kingdom, either themselves causing wars by rebelling against the central government, or being forced to take sides in the wars which the kingdom waged against other groups. Thus the Beni and Gbedegi sided with Bida against the rebellious Kusopa, and again in the Kyedye war, while other tribal sections, such as the riverain Bataci, Kupa, and Ebagi, came to the aid of the Kyedye. In the later times of the kingdom, to which my records chiefly refer, the wars were indeed largely caused by internal disturbances and were directed against rebellious provinces or feudal lords—being reconquests rather than conquests. Historical records mention ten major wars in the thirty years that preceded the British conquest, between 1864 and 1895. Most of these wars are still vividly remembered, and old men would even recall characteristic incidents in the various campaigns. My informants, not unnaturally, greatly extolled the soldierly virtues of the Nupe people. But there is also Barth's testimony that the Nupe army, especially the cavalry, was well known in the Hausa states.[2] Twice, in fact, (in 1880) the Nupe were called to Hausa to help their allies, the Emirs of Kontagora and Gwandu, to put down rebellions in their countries.

The Nupe army was comparatively loosely organized. It possessed only a small nucleus of regular troops, represented in the king's bodyguard; the rest of the army consisted of levies of slaves, volunteers, and mercenary soldiers, raised by the houses of the feudal nobility. But these household troops, too, were largely composed of trained and experienced soldiers.

The king's bodyguard comprised both infantry and cavalry. The foot-soldiers, called *dogari nya dakári* (i.e. 'guards on foot'), were equipped with guns or bows and arrows, and were under the command of the *Etsu Dogari*. The troops who carried guns were mostly slaves, the sons of slaves from the king's household, the others were free men, mercenary soldiers—among them many foreigners, from Hausa, Bornu, and Yoruba —who had taken service under the *Etsu* Nupe. Under *Etsu* Maliki this royal bodyguard numbered 80 men. The royal horse troops, a slightly larger group, were called *lefidi*, after the cotton-wool armour which they wore. Their weapons were swords, spears, and big leather shields. They were commanded by the *Etsu Lefidi* (who was also called *Zarmi*). One of my informants for the present description was the *Etsu Lefidi* of the royal house of Usman Zaki. He was of Hausa origin, a freed slave and the son of an *Etsu Lefidi* who had served under Usman Zaki himself. The horse troops were composed again of slaves and mercenary soldiers. The slaves who served in the royal cavalry were the sons of titled slaves, every court slave of rank having to send one of his sons into the *Etsu*'s bodyguard, and the volunteers were all foreigners. In the reign of *Etsu* Maliki the *lefidi* numbered 100 men.

The troops which were contributed by the various houses of the

[1] The only exception was the warlike Kyedye sub-tribe.

[2] Barth, op. cit. iv, p. 545. Lander reports that Mallam Dendo could 'command 1,000 horsemen, well equipped, and an uncountable number of foot-soldiers' (op. cit. ii, p. 296).

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allegiance, suffice to make the landlord refuse a renewal of the tenancy or even to cancel a running tenancy. Several cases of this kind have come to my knowledge; one even found its way to court: L., a nobleman of high rank, evicted his tenant (and this in the middle of the planting season!) because he had lacked in loyalty towards him and 'betrayed his confidence'.

Political changes have brought about an interesting development. To-day the initiative in this kind of tenantship has to some extent passed from the tenants to the landlords themselves. The landlords were, as we have seen, mostly warriors and courtiers who, living in the capital, never worked their land themselves, but settled their slaves on it, and had it worked by their labour. When slavery was abolished and wars came to an end, when the 'absentee' landlords no longer needed *bara* as soldiers for their private armies and could no longer support a large household of henchmen and hangers-on in the town, they offered their land to their *bara*, and so new settlers went out into the country, occupying the land and founding new farm settlements. Sometimes the noble landowners even settled some of their relations in this fashion on the land, nephews and younger brothers, for whom no place or job could be found in town.

All these farm settlements, whether they were for slaves or *bara*, for peasants turned client or clients turned peasant, are called *tunga*—the same name that is applied to the Nupe village 'colonies'. But the 'private' *tunga* has no name of the kind villages possess, but bears the name of the noble patron to whom it 'belongs'. These *tunga* settlements are scattered all over Cis-Kaduna, and surround Bida in a dense belt. There are innumerable hamlets called Sokyara, Maiyaki, Ndeji, or similar titles of nobility—the titles of the landlords under whose patronage the settlements were founded. To our description of the village *tunga* given in a previous chapter we will add here a few examples of the 'private' *tunga*.

Etsu-Kolo (about four miles south of Bida), consisting of two compounds, two families which are distantly related. Called after the founder of the *tunga*, the father of the present family head. This Etsu-Kolo had been, like his father before him, a *bara* of the *Cekpa* in Bida. Later, however, Etsu-Kolo transferred his allegiance to the then ruling Emir, *Etsu* Mohamadu. The change of allegiance proved good policy: *Etsu* Mohamadu procured for him the position of a Village Head for the whole district with its many *tunga* settlements. Since then the family had remained faithful to *Etsu* Mohamadu's house, even after the Village Headship had been abolished again; they are still paying their regular *dzankά* to his successors, at present to the *Shaba* in Bida.

Emi Bwori ('House of Bwori', one mile north of Bida), called after a certain Bwori, the head of the guild of Bida butchers, and a *bara* of *Etsu* Umaru. This Bwori settled his own slaves in this *tunga*. The present owners of it regard themselves as *bara* of the descendants of Bwori, but have abandoned paying *dzankά* to them; but they still go to 'salute' them whenever they come up to town.

Lumanen (four miles west of Bida), a group of very prosperous *tunga* settlements, founded at different times by relations and noblemen attached to the royal house of *Etsu* Masaba. One settlement has been built by the

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father of the present *Maiyaki* for his *bara*, and is accordingly called *Maiyaki*. A second settlement is called *Emi 'tsu Saba*, and was founded in the time of the father of the present family head, who was a slave in *Etsu* Masaba's house. A third settlement was built recently, by the present family head, who was a *bara* of the present *Etsu* Saidu (also of the Masaba dynasty). All three settlements still pay their regular *dzankά* to their patrons. This year's *dzankά* amounted to one bundle of corn and ten yams.[1]

Makū (one mile south of Bida), consisting of three compounds, called after the noble patron of a certain Ndatazi, a peasant who had had a farm somewhere else first and then moved to the present site, obtaining the land with the help of the *Makū*. He lives in one of the compounds; of the other two one belongs to his brother, and one to a distant relative by marriage, who left his old farm and came here, where the land is better, also becoming a *bara* of the *Makū*. Each of the three houses pays an annual *dzankά* to the present *Makū*. It amounted this year to three bundles of corn and ten yams per compound.

Saci (three miles east of Bida), called after the *Saci* of Bida (a nobility rank). It consists of five compounds; in one a son of the *Saci* is living—the other members of his family are living in Bida—in the other compounds *bara* of the *Saci*. They have discontinued paying their *dzankά*, but still pay regular visits to their patron in town.

One word about the economic arrangement obtaining in the *tunga*. The slaves had worked the land entirely for their masters; that is to say, they had no *efakó* (family) land of their own, but were fed and clothed by their masters, and were also allotted smaller, *bucά* plots, which they were free to work for themselves. The arrangement between the landlord and the *bara* whom he settles on his land is the same métayer system which also regulates the tenantship of the free peasant who accepts clientship in order to obtain land. To-day, the difference between former slaves and *bara* has disappeared; for to most of the freed slaves their change of status meant only a promotion from slave to (free) client. Both, in a good many cases, still acknowledge this form of dependence and, as we saw, still return the annual tithe from their crops to the patron, or at least still pay their respects dutifully. The *dzankά* is no longer a compulsory tribute, and would not be upheld by the court. It is a voluntary gift which confirms the relationship of patronage and protection—a relationship which is as real to-day as it was in former times: political protection for oneself and one's children is bought cheaply with a bundle or two of corn a year.

Hereditary Land: Primary Tenantship

The acquisition of land through clientship follows the general pattern of the Nupe feudal hierarchy. A man who obtains land as a *bara* obtains it from a man of higher rank, either a royal prince or nobleman who holds the land in his own right, or from a rank-holder or titled slave or a king's *bara* who has himself obtained the land from another landlord higher up on the hierarchical scale. These 'primary tenants', however, have acquired their land by a different method, namely, through certain

[1] This census was taken in 1934, when *Etsu* Saidu was still alive.

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kinship group and royal 'house', different though they are in many other respects. The possession of land is only one instance of the joint, 'corporate', rights which characterize the two analogous groups. But of this we shall say more later.

Royal Estates

The three royal estates are situated immediately outside the town walls of Bida. On each of the estates we find a small hamlet, called *esozi*, where (former) royal slaves are living, who were appointed to work the land and look after the royal property.[1] Each of the three *esozi* is placed under the headship of a head slave, styled *Sokyara*—a titled overseer of the royal estates.

The first cultivation in the year—the clearing and first hoeing—was always done by large-scale communal labour in which over a hundred people used to join—slaves, *bara*, peasants from the neighbourhood—and which lasted for one or two days. The *Etsu* himself arranged for food and drink (sorghum beer) and for the customary band of drummers and flute-players to play during the work and at the dance afterwards. After this first cultivation the care of the land was left entirely to the slaves. Originally the whole yield of the royal estates went to the *Etsu* and to the other heads of the royal houses. The *esozi* used to supply over a hundred bundles of corn annually. The royal landlord gave his slaves in return food and clothing, and cared for their various needs. The married slaves (as everywhere in Nupe) were given fairly large individual farm-plots of their own which were not only sufficient to provide food for their families but as a rule also allowed some surplus for trade.

Under modern conditions the position of the royal slaves in the *esozi* has been assimilated to that of clients who only pay an annual tithe from the produce of their farms. But the different Emirs dealt differently with the question of adapting the management to modern conditions. *Etsu* Mohamadu, who was not very interested in farming, abandoned the communal work of the first cultivation; he also lost all personal touch with his *esozi*, and insisted only on the annual *dzankd*. *Etsu* Bello, on the other hand, maintained the communal work of the first cultivation; he demanded one-third of the total produce as 'tithe', leaving the rest to the people of the *esozi*. Under the late *Etsu* Saidu and under the present *Etsu* every family head in the *esozi* paid one to two bundles of sorghum or late millet to the royal landlord, the *Sokyara* acting as intermediary—the total tithe amounting to about ten to fifteen bundles a year. When the Government built the new residence for the present Emir a final change took place. The land outside the Wuya gate of Bida, which formerly belonged to the house of *Etsu* Masaba, was bought by the Government as a site for the new building, and turned into Crown land.[2] The

[1] During the dry season the three royal estates, being situated directly outside the town gates of Bida, are the natural camping-ground for the donkey and cattle caravans that pass through Bida. Now it is the customary practice that these camps—rather primitive grass-shelters erected by the people of the *Etsu*—are always pitched on the farm-land belonging to the ruling *Etsu*. His farms have thus the benefit of the well-manured soil.

[2] In accordance with Nupe practice the fruit-bearing trees were not included

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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which, in the interest of efficiency, has evolved centralized control of labour and means of production on a comparatively large scale, comes closer than any other Nupe craft to the principle of the modern factory system.

We have already seen that in the group at large, i.e. in the glass-workers' guild, a similar intensive co-operation obtains. Its organization falls to the guild-head, who assigns the different tasks to the various workshops and is responsible for the general planning of production. This planning must take into account the varying conditions of the market, and we find, in fact, that the guild-head, without interfering with the commercial transactions of the individual workshop, regularly consults traders and middlemen who visit the *masagá* quarter, and maps out accordingly the scheme of work for his community. On my many visits to the *masagá* I found that the guild-head could always tell me what kind of work was carried out in the various workshops, or when a particular workshop would start on a new task. The guild-head, who styles himself *Masagá*, has his own workshop, where his sons and brothers are working. He does not often work there himself, but certain difficult tasks, such as the making of very big, heavy bangles, which fetch the highest price, he alone can perform. The guild-head assists his co-workers with advice and practical help, also with small loans of money for the purchase of raw material or fuel; he arbitrates in internal quarrels, and he is, like all Nupe guild-heads, the accredited representative of his guild at the Nupe court.

The ever-expanding business of the Bida glass industry involves an almost permanent need of new labour. Formerly the glass-workers bought slaves and trained them in the craft in order to enlarge their machinery of production. To-day they are regularly accepting apprentices. In 1936 five young men were being trained as glass-workers. An apprentice applies to the guild-head, who will then place him in charge of a certain workshop. The training is calculated to take three years, during which time the apprentices continue to live in their own homes and come to the *masagá* quarter only to work. But when their apprenticeship is completed they not only move into the *masagá* quarter, but are expected to marry *masagá* women (as did also the slaves in former days). This adoption into the kinship group is considered essential and is as much a qualification for the practice of the craft as is the technical training itself. Thus the monopoly of the glass-workers is kept intact, and no new branches can be established outside their organization. Kinship interests and kinship co-operation are enlisted in the service of professional co-operation and solidarity and in maintaining the continuity of a highly specialized, monopolized and almost secret, technique of production. Economic interests, in turn, are seen to be sufficiently powerful to effect a radical adjustment in the kinship structure, and to create, in a patrilineal society, a matrilineal enclave.

WEAVERS

The weavers, called *edeluciži*, present another instance of the tripartite organization of Bida crafts. Each of the three *ekpā* of the town harbours one of the three guild sections of the weavers. However,

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

after a slight recovery, for 1*s.* 3*d.* Straw hats ten years ago fetched 2*s.* 6*d.* and 5*s.*; in 1934 8*d.* and 1*s.*; in 1936 5½*d.* and 1*s.* 3*d.*; embroidered gowns sold ten years ago for £5 to £6; in 1934 they could be bought for 30*s.* or £2. But in the attempt to lower prices Nupe guild industries cannot go beyond cutting down profits; they cannot reduce the costs of production—or else they must weaken maintenance of labour and destroy the labour organization itself. One method of reducing what we might call in a broad sense costs of production was to discontinue the payments to family heads and guild-masters, as in the case of blacksmiths and weavers; another, to reorganize production on the basis of individual paid labour, as in the case of the bead-workers. Another, to save on the upkeep of the means of production: this was the case in native iron-mining. Native iron-mining is, in fact, the most convincing instance of the limits set to the reduction in costs of production. Native iron-ore mining was, as we have seen, not destroyed by the competition of a more satisfactory raw material; nor would the price of the native product alone have been responsible for its disappearance from the market. What was responsible was the relation between a low price and a 'high cost of production' which could not be reduced. In this primary industry in the strict sense of the word costs of production equal crude labour costs, i.e. time and human energy. When low prices made it impossible for the iron-ore miners to make enough money even to ensure sufficient food supplies, cost of production had to be reduced, i.e. time and energy taken away from craft-work and devoted to agriculture. We could study the effects of these elementary attempts at reducing 'labour costs', which were forced upon the craftsmen; only one way was open to them, and that was to work their furnaces wastefully, irrespective of gradual deterioration, even to the degree of allowing them to fall into complete disrepair.

Yet it would not be true to say that the economic system of Nupe has never evolved more satisfactory methods to meet these contingencies which every economy must reckon with. I have said that formerly the Nupe craftsmen employed slave-labour on a considerable scale. Now, slave-labour provided an important mechanism to safeguard the flexibility of the economic system with regard to labour costs and profits. Slave-labour represents an investment of capital almost in the modern sense; for by investing capital in slaves one invested surplus capital in a profit-bearing concern, and the surplus made in times of prosperity could thus be made to serve as means of reducing labour-costs in times of stringency. The craftsman who bought slaves could not only use them as cheaper labour in his workshop, but could also put them to agricultural labour, to produce food for himself and his family—food which otherwise would have to be bought out of the profits made in the craft. The Nupe industries have lost the primitive form of industrial capital, slave-labour, without having yet evolved the modern substitute, machinery. They must thus fall short of the most vital necessity in industrial productive organization, its adaptability to changing demands. These conclusions must not be ignored when planning the preservation or revival of African crafts and craft-guilds.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

a judge—the people may have recourse to pawning one family member to procure money for another. Younger sons would be pawned to find the bride-price for the eldest son, whose marriage must be made possible. Or a father would pawn himself to provide money for his son, perhaps to save him from prison or a death sentence. Girls, too, are pawned, though as a rule for a smaller amount of money than boys or men. I have recorded an interesting case of 'multiple' pawning: a man of about 30 had pawned himself in order to be able to marry, but could not find the money to ransom himself. He continued to live in bondage till his son from this marriage was twelve years old, and thus fit to be pawned in turn. The boy took the place of his father as pawn in the same house, and the older man was released. I do not know when, or if, the boy was in turn released.

It is interesting to compare pawning with slavery. The first difference is that pawning is, at least in theory, regarded as a purely temporary arrangement. The father or elder brother of a pawn would always expect to release their relative from bondage in from five to ten years. The pawn works for his master, in his house or on his land, like all other household members, slaves, or junior family members. But unlike slaves, pawns are servants in the narrow sense of the word: they cannot expect friendly help from their master; they would not, for example, be married at the expense of their master—if they cannot afford the bride-price they must remain unmarried. On the other hand, the master may not beat or kill the pawn, as he may a slave: this would constitute a normal case of assault or homicide, actionable before the court. A pawn who is unwilling or unable to work satisfactorily, can, however, be exchanged for another more promising member of his family. Pawns and their whole family are held in general contempt. There is no shame in having become a slave—this is 'luck of war'; but pawns and their families are tainted with a disgrace not easily forgotten. In pawning poverty, itself a shameful state in the eyes of the Nupe, reaches its lowest ebb. Even house slaves look down upon pawns, and order them about as their inferiors.

Another difference between pawning and slavery is the amount of money involved. While the prices for slaves are firmly fixed, the loan for which the pawn is taken as security varies greatly, between £3 and £10. The work of the pawn during the time of bondage represents the 'interest' on the loan. The profit motive is expressed most clearly in the practice that girl pawns were accepted only for smaller amounts. For with girls one had to reckon with a shorter period of 'amortization' as they might get married early and be redeemed by the bride-price. However, the profit motive is not sufficient to explain the institution of pawning. A wealthy man could not, according to the Nupe code of morality, refuse a loan of this kind to a man who was badly in need of the money. Which means that the creditor might have to agree even to less tempting and profitable offers. Frequently he had to accept a young boy who, hardly yet an efficient labourer, would live in his house and learn farm-work or a craft only to be taken away again just as he had become a useful member of the household. For £5 one could buy outright a grown-up, well-

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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trained, slave; for a pawn, with his restricted usefulness, one might have to pay more than twice the amount. There is no doubt, then, that the institution of pawning represented not only a profit-making, 'capitalist' investment, but also, to some extent, a 'humanitarian' duty linked with status and prestige, a crude attempt at alleviating the hardships involved in the unequal distribution of wealth. Well-educated Nupe men, themselves members of the wealthier classes, with whom I discussed pawning, even went so far as to explain pawning (at least on a moderate scale) as an institution of considerable educational value enabling the sons of the poor to study farm-work and husbandry in the houses of prosperous and enterprising men. They would admit drawbacks only in the excessive practice of pawning, which, they maintained, was a recent development, brought about by rising prices and rising cost of living. These drawbacks, as they saw them, were that with the increase in their numbers, the pawns, many of whom frequently worked together in the same household, grew lazy and irresponsible, and showed openly their resentment at having to work for strange masters. The complaints of my informants were thus that in the combination of material and moral rewards which the people of wealth and status expected from the institute of pawning, the material rewards had completely to give place to moral rewards.

A similar combination of material returns from invested wealth with benefits of a more abstract order—status and prestige—is also characteristic of the institution of clientship (already explained in Chap. VIII). The share of the 'abstract' benefits becomes larger the closer we approach forms of expenditure and investment bound up with social status: display of wealth in household arrangements, festivities, the equipment of one's retinue, and so forth. To this and similar questions we shall return later.

3: Forde E-4 (no date) 1955 FF52 Nupe FF52

on the right bank of the Niger, where Lokoja now stands, but at its founding moved over to the left bank where they are to-day, in the Basa-Nge District of Igala Division, Kabba Province. The District contains 12 riverain and nine inland units, which are mostly Basa-Nge, except for five Igala and two Igbira-Panda-Kakanda. The largest is Gbonoko, the District headquarters. The Basa-Nge are subject to the *Ata* Gala.[16]

Other groups, originally alien, but now Nupeized

Konú (Eyagi-Nupe): of Yoruba (Yagba) origin, brought to Nupe country as slaves to introduce the Yoruba arts of weaving and indigo-dyeing. They are to be found in Kutigi and the neighbouring villages.[17]

Gbari Bautá ("Gbari slaves"): in the north of Nupe territory near the Gbari border.[18]

Kakanda (Hyaba, Akanda):[19] on both banks of the Niger, north of its confluence with the Gurara River. They are of non-Nupe stock, though, according to Temple,[20] they have always lived among the Nupe. Clifford, however, says that they were formerly (? *c.* 1750) subject to Igala.[21] They have certainly undergone cultural assimilation to the Nupe and have adopted the language of the Nupe "proper." According to Westermann and Bryan, they speak either a dialect of Nupe or a closely related language.[22]

Ibanji: a sub-tribe mentioned in the 1931 Census, which has not been identified.

In addition to the groups mentioned above, Temple gives several names which are villages or settlements and not sub-tribes.[23] Her *Bata* (misprinted *Bafa* in the 1931 Census) and described as an agricultural people living in Lapai Emirate are not Nupe but probably Gbari. Her *Bororózhi* (nomadic cattle Fulani) only come to Nupe on seasonal migration and are not Nupeized; her *Góizhi* (settled Fulani) are the Fulani ruling class of Nupe Emirate and not a group in a tribal sense.[24]

Demographic Data

Population Estimates

1952 Census: 348,979 (Northern Region)
10,198 (Eastern and Western Regions)
1931 Census: 326,017 (Northern Provinces)
1921 Census: 349,008 (Northern Provinces)

Sub-tribes[25]

1931 Census:[26]

Beni	.. ..	49,595	Ebe	.. ..	9,100	Dibo	 18,220
Bataci	.. ..	4,627	Kupa	.. ..	15,470	Kakanda	.. 4,518
Kyedye	.. ..	2,493	Benu	.. ..	7,457	Basa-Nge	.. 19,163

The figures of the 1931 Census show a decrease of 23,000 or 7% on the figures for 1921. Fluctuations in the earlier numbers given for the populations have resulted

[16] Nadel, 1942, p. 12; Hopkins, 1934; Westermann and Bryan, 1952, p. 86.
[17] Nadel, op cit., p. 20
[18] Ibid., p. 21.
[19] They should not be confused with the Akanda of Kabba and Koton Karifi Divisions of Kabba Province, who are Yoruba. The Kakanda are said by Meek (1917) to call themselves Ashe. They are known to the Hausa as Bunu (the name of a Yoruba section) and to the Igbira as Ehabe (MacBride, 1935).
[20] Temple, 1919, p. 167.
[21] Miles Clifford, "A Nigerian chiefdom," *J. roy. anthrop. inst.*, LXVI, 1936, pp. 392–436.
[22] Westermann and Bryan, loc. cit.; Nadel, op. cit., p. 13.
[23] e.g. Baedegi, Sakpe, Etsu, Pateji, Kutegi, Enagi, Gbachi, Duchu, Zumbufu.
[24] See Nadel, 1942, p. 71.
[25] Figures for all the sub-tribes listed above are not available, but the Census gives 11,944 for "Ibanji," which has not been identified.
[26] Later figures are not available.

3: Forde E-4 (no date) 1955 FF52 Nupe FF52

565 Below the *sarakiši* comes a group of minor office-holders, heads of the Bida craft guilds, who receive their titles and the customary gift of a turban from the *Etsu*. The head of the Bida brokers, who acts as an agent for the king in trade and commercial matters in the capital, holds a similar position.

565 The lowest titled class in the Nupe social order is that of the *ena wuši*, whose 567 members bear the titles of the former court slaves.[13] Formerly these titles were held by men of high birth captured in war and given titles in return for loyal service; they could rise in the service of the king as bodyguards, police, messengers, tax-collectors, etc. A new king usually took over the officials of his predecessor.

565 Below the orders of title-holders come the commoners (*talakiši*), who constitute the great majority of the population.

Patronage[13]

566 A system of patronage or clientship is an important feature of Nupe society.
675 The client (*bara*) attaches himself to the household of his patron as a servant or in some other capacity from which he may rise to the position of a trusted friend and may even marry into the patron's family. Clients may be divided into three categories: those who seek political protection without surrendering their independence, who do not work for their patron but are regarded rather as "adopted children"; those who are poor and anxious to avoid hard work on the land; and those who hope to achieve some eminence by attaching themselves to a man of position and influence. The clients of the royal princes may rise to high positions and eventually become the *bara* of a ruling king, their rank then being almost equal to that of the official nobility. Indeed, rich and ambitious men may even buy themselves a clientship in the house of a royal prince or of the king.

The system is beneficial to both parties, the client receiving material benefit and protection and possibly a title, and the patron acquiring servants, soldiers for the contingent he must provide for the king's army, and followers to add to his prestige.

Age-sets[14]

561 Boys and young men in a village or town are grouped in three graded associations: *ena wáwágiši*, for boys between the ages of about 10 and 15; *ena dzákangiši*, of ages *c.* 15 to 20, and *ena gbarúfuši*, of ages *c* 20 to 30. Every age-set (*ena*) passes successively through these grades. Except in the capital, there is only one set or association in each grade within the local community at any one time. Each is led by an older man or by a boy from the highest rank of the next grade. The head of the highest, known as *ndákotsú*, is chosen from among adults and has considerable influence. The main emphasis within the age-sets is on seniority. Titles, often copying those for adults in the wider society, are distributed by the leader on the basis of reputation, ability, and merit, sometimes anticipating the future rank of the holder. Those acquired in the highest grade may be retained by the young man for life. The chief public functions of the sets lie in the execution of co-operative tasks, but they also have a recreational side.

For girls, an association (*ena*) exists only for the lowest age-set.

Government[15]

631 Prior to the more recent developments of local government, the Nupe kingdom was divided into four zones for the purposes of political, judicial, and tax administration. The first was the territory of the conquered and tributary "outside" peoples; the second, within the boundaries of the kingdom proper, included the

[13] For a description of slavery proper, see below, p. 41.
[14] Nadel, 1942, pp. 122–7.
[15] Nadel, op. cit., pp. 383–401; 1935a, pp. 290–71, 292.
[16] Nadel, 1942, pp. 115–16

3: Forde E-4 (no date) 1955 FF52 Nupe FF52

SLAVERY

567 Slaves attached to the royal house and the nobility could rise to positions of wealth and influence, and some of the former titled court slaves have in recent times become Native Authority officials. Slaves had a certain measure of social and economic independence; though female slaves had no income and their earnings belonged to their master, they might become the concubines of a free man and be given their freedom. Any children born would in any case be free. Male slaves could seek to purchase their independence.

Slaves were obtained both by capture in war and by purchase in the Bida market. Owners had the power of life and death over slaves, though in practice they rarely maltreated them. Indeed, when slavery was abolished, many former slaves elected to remain as unpaid servants with their former masters. Children born to a man's slaves were called *mangi* (" children of the house ") and could not be sold, maltreated, or killed. They were brought up as members of the household but were not entitled to a share in the master's inheritance. A master would, however, provide the marriage payment for a marriage arranged by him for one of his slaves with another slave.[33]

PAWNING

42 568 The practice of pawning human pledges grew to enormous proportions before its final suppression in 1933–34. Under the pressure of unexpected or imperative demands, one person in a family, preferably a male, would be pawned for 5–10 years. Pawning was regarded as a disgrace and the pawns were looked down on by their masters and even by the household slaves.[34]

POSITION OF WOMEN

562 Women's activities, other than household tasks, include spinning, weaving, cooking cakes for sale in the market, and hairdressing (a lucrative profession). Women are also doctors and traders, though those whose professional duties keep them away from home for long periods are commonly regarded as " loose " women. They collect the produce of all trees except palm-oil and kola; they cultivate and sell groundnuts and root crops and help to trade some of the men's crops.

A woman's earnings as a trader cannot be touched by her husband, but remain her property until her death, when he inherits them. Among commoners a woman is often better-off than her husband and may lend him money for taxes and the purchase of tools, and even provide for marriages and funerals. The inter-sex hostility, which has been accentuated by the economic independence and consequent sexual freedom of women, also shows itself in the Nupe conception of witchcraft, where a witch is thought to do mystically what a woman actually does in everyday life.[35]

562 565 The most important women's titles are those of *nimwoye*, of the royal house of Masaba, and *sagi*, of the royal houses of Umaru and Usman Zaki alternatively. Quarrels between women are brought before women holding these titles and the women of Bida town and the villages bring them gifts. *Sagi* is also the title of the " head of the women " in every Nupe village. The chief woman commoner in Bida has the title of *sonya*; she organizes all large-scale women's work and is entrusted with the supervision of the market. She is now an official of the Native Administration, receiving a small salary. The status of a woman by descent is not 554 reduced on marriage, since Nupe class sentiments cannot admit a lowering of the status of anyone high-born.[36]

[33] Nadel, 1942, pp. 103–8, 157.
[34] Ibid., pp. 311–13.
[35] Nadel, 1954a, pp. 172–81.
[36] Nadel, 1942, pp. 331–4, 147–56; Temple, 1919, p. 326.